but he does not have full jurisdiction and authorities such as sales tax, provident fund, etc. to intervence in these matters;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what action Government propose to take to remedy the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) to (c) SEZ Act/Rules envisage that State Governments shall endeavour to provide single point clearance system to the developer and the units. The constitution of the Approval Committee with the representatives of the State Government is expected to enable single window clearance, provided the State Governments delegate necessary powers to the nominees on the Approval Committee. In so far as subsequent compliance issues are concerned, the statutory provisions of the Provident Fund Act, the Sales Tax Act, etc. will have to be complied with by the units and the developer.

Extension of Advantages for units of Software Technology Parks of India

1644. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state whether National Association of Software and Services Companies have demanded extension of advantages for units in Software Technology Parks of India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): Yes, Sir. The National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASCOM) have requested for continuation of the Income Tax Exemption for units in the Software Technology Parks (STPs). At present, the benefit is available for exports effected upto 31st March, 2009, only.

Ratification of SAFTA

1645.SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether all the member countries have ratified Sourt Asian Free Trade Area and if not, which countries have not yet ratified the same; and

(b) what steps have since been taken by Government and other member countries in pursuance of the terms of the agreement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) All the Member of States of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) (India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) have ratified the Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA).

(b) Although the SAFTA Agreement was scheduled to come into force from 1st January, 2006, in view of the different budget period, the Member States would give effect to the phased Tariff Liberalization Programme of SAFTA from 1st July, 2006 (Nepal from 1st August, 2006) with the condition that the tariff liberalization for the first two years would be completed by 31st December, 2007.

Sustainable livelihood for small farmers

1646. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any representation was received from the group of farmers who took part in a parallel "peoples camp" in Hong Kong during the recent WTO Ministerial meeting seeking Government's intervention to protect sustainable livelihood for small farmers in the context of the WTO negotiations;

(b) if so, the nature and extent of protection sought for small farmers; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) A number of representations were received from group of farmers and NGOs in connection with the Hong Kong Ministerial in December, 2005.

Essentially they emphasized that agriculture is a major source of livelihood for Indian farmers and their interests should be protected from the unfair agriculture trade practices adopted by developed countries,